



BEST OF EAST EUROPE – 15 days

Budapest (Hungary) – Krakow – Auschwitz – Warsaw (Poland) – Berlin – Dresden (Germany) – Prague (Czech Republic) – Lake Bled – Ljubljana (Slovenia) – Vienna (Austria)

Discover Europe’s most secret and exciting destinations in a travel through Bohemian country. Colorful history, fascinating folklore, scenic countryside and elegant cities. The charm of these cities will be memories of a life time.

The Scenery and landscape along the route is great. All our guests on this route have found themselves running out of superlatives as they sought to describe their experiences... Lake Bled they said was an absolute paradise as well as the journey through the Julia Alps. And without exception they were most pleasantly surprised with the landscape in Poland.

Add to it ... fine hotels, daily American breakfast and dinners (mostly Indian), an easy paced itinerary, varied sightseeing to avoid monotony, entrances to important attractions.

Yes, and 2 delightful evening parties as well. A tour fit for the connoisseur!

SUMMARY PROGRAMME :

- Budapest : 2 nights Budapest hotel or sim, city tour including SPA visit; cruise on Danube; A great Hungarian evening complete with folklore show and dinner
- Krakow : 2 nights Sympozjum hotel or sim, city tour; visit the fascinating Wieliczka Salt Mine; A delightful private Polish Polka Party in the evening
- Auschwitz : Enroute visit to the camp so chillingly evoked in “Schindler’s List”. Many of our guests Rate this experience as one of the most touching in their lives.
- Warsaw : 2 nights Novotel Centrum or sim, Courtyard by Marriott; city tour with shopping time at The famous mall Zlote Tarasy...
- Berlin : 2 nights Holiday Inn City East or sim, city tour
- Dresden : Enroute visit to the “Florence on the Elbe”. Ruled by Saxon Royalty for over 700 years, its one of the most beautiful cities in Germany with its mosaiced walls. The city also hosts Emperor Aurangzeb’s “Coat of Arms” which was never shipped to India.
- Prague : 2 nights Hotel Duo Praha or sim; city tour, Shop for Crystals
- Lake Bled : 2 nights Golf or Park hotel, orientation tour including an option to visit casino. Delightful evening with local folk music; Delicious Sokol soup & cream cake experience
- Ljubljana : Visit the beautiful Slovenian capital; city tour including visit to Old Town, Baroque Cathedral etc...
- Vienna : 2 nights Eventhotel Pyramid or sim; city tour including Schonbrunn Palace;
Optional : Evening at an Opera
- Meals : Daily American breakfast & dinner
- Portrege : One Pc of check baggage in/out of the hotel
- Scenic drives : In Austria, Slovenia & Poland





DAY BY DAY ITINERARY :

DAY 1 : ARRIVE BUDAPEST (ID)

Arrive Budapest airport complete your immigration and customs formalities.

Then board your coach and drive to hotel and check in.

Beautiful Hungarian capital of Budapest.... the impressive capital, comprises the twin cities of Buda and Pest situated on two sides of the River. Today drive to the beautiful Hungarian capital of Budapest.... the impressive capital comprises the twin cities of Buda and Pest situated on two sides of the River. Check into hotel. Indian dinner.

Budapest is bright at night with the Landmark buildings brilliantly lit up and a fascinating sight. The Pedestrian area as well and you must walk around to really feel the place.

Budapest is also the SPA capital. A remarkable numbers of springs is to be found here. The flow originates from a fault situated sideways in relation to the city and its waters which reach temperature between 24 C and 25 C, gush out of various depths ranging from just a few meters below the Buda part up to around a kilometer in the Pest area... the beneficial effects of which were first discovered by the Romans. Today there are many a hotel build over the SPA. The most famous and frequented Thermal baths in Buda is the Gellert Baths with fine Art Deco interiors which you will have time to visit and experience on your own ! There are therapeutic institutes and under supervision you can under go treatment as well depending on your ailment.

Evening and late evening : You must stroll the streets ... get a feel of the city and admire its brilliantly lit Monuments. Overnight at your hotel.

A Hungarian evening awaits you tonight. Spend an enjoyable evening in a traditional restaurant in the hills of Buda. Marvelous views of the illuminated city. After an aperitif we swerve you a 3-course meal with wine accompanied by a varied folklore programme. An oportunity to dance...

DAY 2 : AT BUDAPEST (ABF, D)

0830 hrs morning sightseeing tour will introduce you to this fascinating city, including Heroes' Square, Gellert Hill, the Castle district, St. Matthew's church and the Fishermen's bastion in the Pest area located on a hill, with its spectacular view over the city.

Cruise on river Danube will be provided today. You will then be able to appreciate what made Johan Strauss compose "Blue Danube" Probably the most popular composition. Indian dinner.

DAY 3 : BUDAPEST-KRAKOW – 394 kms – 7 hrs driving time (ABF, ID)

Morning board your coach and drive to Krakow on the foot hills of the Tatra Mountains. Scenic stretches enroute. On arrival, check into hotel. Tonight we have in store for you a Polish Polka Party!!! Dance away the night. Dinner at hotel

DAY 4 : AT KRAKOW (ABF,D)

For over a thousand years, Krakow has been the center of science, culture and art in Poland.

Your tour begins with a short walk along the streets of the former Jewish district of Kazimierz. Next, Wawel Hill, crowned by Wawel Castle and Wawel Cathedral and the seat of royal power up until the 17th century. The Castle was home to many Polish kings and queens and the royal crypts in the Cathedral their final resting place, along with several other Polish heroes.





A walk up Grodzka street leads you to the heart of Krakow, the Rynek Główny, or Main Market Square. Here the large Gothic Cloth Hall is the perfect place to shop for local souvenirs.

The last sightseeing stop is the twin-spired St Mary's Church with its famous medieval altar by Wit Stwosz and where, every hour the brave trumpeter of Krakow still calls out his warning.

This afternoon a visit to the Wieliczka salt mine is a must and provided. Legend has it that the salt mines in Wieliczka were part of the dowry of the Hungarian princess, Kinga, when she wed Boleslaw the Shy over 700 years ago, making the Wieliczka Salt Mine one of the oldest in all of Europe.

Over the centuries, devout and superstitious miners have carved fabulous figures, monuments and altarpieces out of its salt walls. These amazing works of art, in addition to the mine's historical importance, have earned the Wieliczka Salt Mine a place on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list.

Your route through the mine leads you through galleries and chambers on three levels. (you can actually touch the walls and take a lick of pure raw salt!) The staircases are well ventilated. Unique and richly ornamented Chapel. The guided walk through Wieliczka Salt Mine consists of 20 monumental chambers joined by 1.5 miles (2.5 kilometers) of pathways and an underground salt mining exhibition called Muzeum Zup Krakowskich located on Level 3. There are spectacular salt crystals, salt chandeliers, statues of Pope John Paul, Copernicus, a 3D carving on the salt walls of the 'Last Supper' and many other Renaissance art.

This walk is not strenuous and can be undertaken in ordinary footwear. The return to the surface will be by a "Double Decker" lift up the Danilowicz Shaft under 10 seconds!

And for the young, there is also a bungee jumping site in this place.

Client feed back ... 'It was stunning. Could never imagine such a spectacular place so deep in the underground.... A veritable and unique museum with statues and frescos made of salt'.

DAY 5 : KRAKOW-AUSCHWITZ-WARSAW – 300 kms – 5 ½ hrs driving time (ABF, ID)

This morning we step back into recent history when we proceed on a guided visit to the Camp at Auschwitz, so chillingly evoked in "Schindler's List", reminding us of the World War II Holocaust. Then we make our way to Warsaw. Indian dinner and check into hotel.

Client feed back ... 'A moving narration and experience that brought tears to our eyes'.

DAY 6 : AT WARSAW (ABF, ID)

Breakfast. Morning we visit the famous landmarks, cultural centers and busy market squares. During your Half Day City Sightseeing Tour of Warsaw you will gain a general impression of Poland's capital. By bus you pass the Royal Route with its aristocratic residences, historic churches and famous statues.

Historical sites such as the Ghetto Memorial, the Monument of Warsaw Uprising, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Grand Theatre, Chopin's monument, the Belvedere Palace and the Old Town are all seen on your tour.

At the Old Town you can enjoy a walking tour passing by the Castle Square, King Sigismund's Column, St. John's Cathedral, the Old Town Market Square and the Barbican. Afternoon at leisure. Indian dinner





DAY 7 : WARSAW-BERLIN – 590 kms – 8 hrs driving time (ABF, ID)
Morning drive into Germany, where we are soon in the re-instated capital, Berlin.

Client feed back on Poland on the last leg of the journey... 'we had no idea of the scenic beauty of the Polish countryside or its awesome heritage. Its a fairytale scenery like you can imagine from one's childhood books like Hansel & Gretel'.

Arrive Berlin dinner at Indian restaurant and then check into hotel.

DAY 8 : AT BERLIN (ABF, ID)

Morning we visit the Berlin Wall and Checkpoint Charlie this Berlin City Tour. Experience the history of the Berlin Wall and visit the famous Checkpoint Charlie which during the Cold War, was the main gateway for non-Germans between the two Berlins during the Cold War.

Take a photo of Brandenburg Gate or Reichstag (German Parliament) during the photo stop at bus-stop Brandenburg Gate/Reichstag.

Afternoon at leisure to explore the city on your own. Indian dinner

DAY 9 : BERLIN-DRESDEN-PRAGUE – 355 kms - 5 hrs driving time (ABF, ID)

Today we travel through the Sprewell Forest to "Florence on the Elbe", beautiful Dresden. On our arrival an orientation tour includes the Saxon wall, Semper Opera and 18th century Cathedral.

Clients feed back ... 'Dresden was really a surprise. We had not heard much of it. Thought it was an industrial town. We were awestruck by the magnificent architecture of the building, the opera house, the Royal Courtyard, the church and the mosaiced Saxon walls!' Next we cross into the Czech Republic. From here we make our way to the astonishing city of Prague.

Arrive Prague dinner and Indian restaurant and then check into hotel.

The Golden City Prague... if there is any place that can rival Paris for its charms... this is the place. The city is beautiful at day and even more at night. The Iron curtain has been brought down and the city has sprung to life with buildings renovated/ scrubbed...with many a building in bright Pastel colors. Evening life in Prague is equally interesting and there is something for all tastes... nightclubs, Discos, Operas and Concerts, Folk Shows or simply walking around the area of Old Quarter, Wencelas Square and the Vltava river front.... the monuments softly lit up and bringing out all the charms of the Golden City. Prague was made into a "UN Heritage City" and voted "the European City of Culture".

DAY 10 : AT PRAGUE (ABF, ID)

Morning the Grand city tour covers - the Old city center, including Wenceslas Square, Charles Bridge, the Old Town Square and the Jewish Quarter, culminating at the fabulous Prague Castle (Hradcany) on the other side of the River Vltava. There after we leave you at the Old Quarter with the Weneslas Square nearby. Stroll the streets... see the illuminations and then you will appreciate our decision to include Prague.

Afternoon & evening is free for you to shop. We will leave you at a Crystal factory outlet. Here you will find the best of Crystals made anywhere ... fine Bohemian crystal and cut (etched) glass unmatched anywhere in the world.

The nicest thing is the down to earth and affordable prices. This is Czech shopping at its best and a delight forever to adorn your home.





DAY 11 : PRAGUE-LAKE BELD – 615 Kms – 8 hrs driving time (ABF, ID)

Board your coach and drive through the beautiful countryside to Lake Bled.

We arrive Lake Bled by late afternoon. This small village town is cosy with beautiful warm local people. Enjoy a remarkably lovely view of the lake and its surroundings. Check into hotel. Balance day free to enjoy the lake front. In the evening your tour director will treat you to "cream cakes" a delicacy of Lake Bled.

Dinner at hotel with entertainment by Slovenian accordionist especially for you.

DAY 12 : AT LAKE BLEED (ABF, D)

Today we visit the capital city of Ljubljana. A city that contains all the amenities of large capitals, while retaining the charm, kindness and relaxed atmosphere of smaller localities. You will realise that Ljubljana is a city with a young and dynamic pulse.

A 2 hrs walking tour features the main sights in the Old Town, including the baroque cathedral of St Nicholas, the elegant Fountain of the three Carniolan rivers and the Town Hall; you will proceed further through the Town Square, the Old Square and the Upper Square, and cross the Cobblers' Bridge and the Triple Bridge, both designed by our famous architect Jože Plečnik. You will also explore the left bank of the Ljubljanica River, with a stress on the Congress Square.

This day is at leisure. We will provide you a courtesy transfer to Ljubljana to visit the flea market and also to shop for Slovenian Crystals. Includes is a visit to "Sokal" for a traditional Slovenian vegetarian soup serve in edible bread bowls... a unique Ljubljana speciality. Later return to Lake Bled. Evening at leisure on the lake front; visit Casino.

Note : on the strong recommendation of our guests, we are staying for 2 nights at Lake Bled. Many of our guests during the 2008 inaugural tour who have visited scenic areas in Switzerland, New Zealand, Scandinavia rated Lake Bled and the journey through Julia Alps as one of their finest experiences.

DAY 13 : LAKE BLEED-LJUBLJANA-VIENNA - 440 Kms / 5 ½ hrs driving time

Morning board your coach and drive to Vienna through the beautiful Slovenian and Austrian Countryside.

Arrive Vienna, one of the 10 most beautiful cities in the world. Complete your immigration and customs formalities. Then board your coach and transfer to hotel and check in.

Evening, an orientation tour enroute to the Indian restaurant for dinner

DAY 14 : AT VIENNA (ABF, ID)

Morning, begin your day with visit to the showrooms of Schonbrunn Palace, once the summer residence of the Hapsburg family and Maria Theresa, mother of Marie Antoinette, who later became Queen to Louis XVI. The interiors gorgeously finished gives you an impression of the grandeur and opulence during the glorious days of the Hapsburg Empire. The family had ruled continuously for over 700 years.

Then a guided sightseeing tour introduces us to the Austrian Capital... & the city of Mozart and Strauss and the seat of the Erstwhile Austro-Hungary Empire ruled by the Hapsburg Dynasty for over 650 years till as late as World War I ... Marvel at the architectural excellence of its buildings and palaces, all in the fine state of maintenance, lovely parks and Pedestrian Walks, its fabulous Opera houses, the Rathaus and the Parliament building in Neo Baroque style etc., the St. Stephen's spired cathedral and the pedestrian area.

Free time at the Stephen Platz.... Indian dinner

DAY 15 : DEPART VIENNA (ABF, D)

Transfer to airport for your flight back to India.

